Bobby Kennedy Wordy and Tepid on Peace, P. 2

And Vietnam Provides No Reasons to Believe They've Grown Any Smarter

"What could I have said . . . ? That the CIA and the Pentagon are stupid?"

—John F. Kennedy's angry outburst after his first post-Bay of Pigs press conference, as now disclosed by Pierre Salinger in his book "With Kennedy" p. 155. For extended comment turn to page 3 of this week's issue.

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Why Should They Trust Johnson Any More Than We Do?

Goldberg under Johnson is stuck at the UN, as Stevenson so often was under Kennedy, with the task of making black look white, a belligerent policy look peaceful. His speech at the General Assembly is to be read not as diplomacy but as public relations. It will go down in the annals as another of those peace offensives with which his master has prefaced his successive escalations. Even as the dove cooed, the hawks swooped. B-52 raids on the demilitarized zone marked a qualitative escalation, for these had only been used once before in the North, against Mugia pass last April; McNamara announced a 30% increase in warplane production; and in Washington, the White House, the Pentagon and State, in horrified unison, denied reports in New York and London that the U.S. planned to suspend its bombing to give Hanoi more time to consider Goldberg's proposals. To make sure Goldberg was not taken too seriously by the other side, Johnson held a press conference the same day and declined when asked to characterize Goldberg's proposals as either important or new. This was probably the most honest statement Lyndon Johnson ever made. All he would say was, "I think it is good for him to say it," as if this were an exercise in occupational therapy to keep a frustrated UN spokesman from blowing his top.

Neatly Contrived Pitfalls

Goldberg's speech had to fit the crusty old elements of past Johnson and Rusk peace offers into a shiny new case designed to look as much as possible like the real thing—that is, U Thant's Three Points. When the works are opened up, it is easy to see how different Goldberg's is. In the first place, he is still trying to collect a price for Johnson's blackmail bombings of the North. U Thant's Point 1 was the unconditional cessation of these bombings. But Goldberg's is to stop them only if assured "that this step will be answered *promptly* by a *corresponding* and *appropriate* de-escalation from the other side." The italics, which are ours, light up the trap. How fast would we consider prompt and how much withdrawal would we accept as appropriate and corresponding? The North would have to come hat in hand to satisfy us on the price of ending our bombardment, and act under threat of resumption. In effect the first step would be not a time-table of our withdrawal, as de Gaulle suggested, but a time-table of theirs. Until we got our assurance, we would not put into effect this "prior" cessation. The weaker power must submit to the stronger. In addition the North, by bargaining its withdrawal against our bombardment, would have to equate the two morally, to justify Johnson's course since February, 1965, and to admit itself the invading aggressor. It must not only accept the conqueror's terms but wipe clean his bloody hands.

From the North's point of view its armed intervention was only a response to the blackmail bombings in the first place. It sees us intervening in a civil war which broke out because of our persistent violations of the Geneva agreements. From a world point of view, we would set a precedent whereby any strong power would be able to bomb any weak power until the weaker accepted its terms. That is the jungle law of reprisal to which we have always objected when practiced by other powers at Sidi Sakiet and Suez. U Thant asked cessation of the bombings not only as unmistakable evidence of a good faith otherwise all too questionable but as obedience to world law.

In U Thant's view this would set the stage for Point 2, a mutual reduction of military activity in the South to pave the way for a cease-fire and peace talks. But Goldberg's Point 2 is full of tricky pitfalls. He wants "a *supervised, phased* withdrawal of all external forces." What would be left after

(Continued on Page Four)

Asian Powers or Uncle Sam's Coolies?

Only Americans, not Asians, will be taken in by the spectacle of Johnson's forthcoming "Asian summit" at Manila. It's the absentees not the participants who tell the story. Neither our SEATO ally Pakistan, nor Japan nor powers as anti-Communist as Malaysia and Indonesia will take part. They shun the charade as too obvious. Indonesia is fresh from an anti-Communist purge which turned into one of the worst blood baths in history but its new anti-Peking Foreign Minister, Adam Malik, has been calling for unconditional cessation of U.S. bombing in North Vietnam as the first essential step to peace in every capital he has visited, New Delhi, Algiers, Cairo and most recently Belgrade. Only the Asians most blatantly on our payroll will be at Manila—the Vietnamese and South Korean military juntas, the corrupt Filipino oligarchs and the traditionally mercenary Thais, the first to sell out to the Axis. Our military are always boasting of how much less these Asian soldiers cost. It's not the upkeep, it's the down payment that matters. Marcos has just made off with $55,000,000 in aid to send 2,000 of his soldiers (non-combat yet!) to Vietnam. That's over and above their equipment and upkeep, or $27,500 per head, the world's most expensive coolies. When it comes to business, who dares call the Asians underdeveloped?

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Bundestag Minority on Eve of Erhard's Visit Shifted Against Nuclear Weapons

Johnson Seems to Think New State Dept. Choices Devilishly Clever

FRESH FACES TO COVER STALE POLITICS: That's all the new State Department appointments mean. Katzenbach made a good record as Attorney General; Johnson will ruin him, as he ruined Humphrey and Goldberg, by using him as another front on Vietnamese policy. Eugene V. Rostow, who served in the State Department under Acheson, shares his brother, Walt's, hard line in foreign affairs. Foy Kohler, the third of the new appointments, is one of those colorless diplomats who fits so perfectly into the Rusk woodwork. Katzenbach is a technician, with no strong motivations. The best clue to how Johnson really thinks about these appointments was Wm. S. White's column (*Washington Post,* Sept. 24). I once described the personally likeable White as the Wyatt Earp of American journalism; he's closer to Johnson's wavelength than any other Washington journalist. White saw the appointments as devilishly clever—Katzenbach would help to sell Bobby Kennedy; Eugene Rostow, the intellectuals, on the Vietnamese war. In "Prof. Rostow," White wrote, jubilantly, Johnson had acquired "an authentic intellectual, a kind of Pope or at least a cardinal in the hierarchy of the academics." If we may be forgiven a pun, we suppose Johnson will soon expect Rostow to produce an encyclical built for two.

McNamara Scares the Germans

GERMANY AND NUCLEAR ARMS: Most of the press, including the *New York Times* failed to cover two signally important events which provided the background for Erhard's visit to Washington. One was the fact that the Free Democrats joined the Social Democrats during a Bundestag debate on the eve of the visit in calling for a German finger on "the safety catch" rather than the trigger, i.e. a veto on the use of nuclear weapons on German soil, East or West. The Free Democrats and the Social Democrats between them control 249 of the 496 votes in the Bundestag, which means a majority against the continued drive of the Christian Democrats and the military for nuclear weapons. The Free Democratic chairman told the Bundestag that anxiety about German nuclear ambitions was not confined to East Europe. Helmut Schmidt, the Social Democratic defense spokesman, proposed that West Germany renounce nuclear ambitions in favor of membership on a NATO nuclear consultative committee, as proposed by McNamara. Erhard's Foreign Minister, Schroeder, showed his government's colors when he disparaged the whole idea of a non-proliferation agreement. While the debate was going on, McNamara at the NATO conference in Rome won unanimous agreement for his consultative proposals. The Defense Correspondent of *The Times* (London) reported (Sept. 21) McNamara not only hoped this would prove a substitute for any MLF but had "so re-educated" the West German Defense Minister "in the complexities of nuclear defense . . . that pressure for nuclear hardware for Germany is now expected to cease." It's a pity McNamara can't frighten off the Joint Chiefs of Staff as easily.

ADAM CLAYTON POWELL'S WING-TRIMMING: It's nonsense to call this racism. The revolt was run by liberals who have worked much harder than he on civil rights and poverty legislation. Adam is the Nkrumah of Harlem, a brilliant man whose career was ruined by the temptations of power. . . .

MIHAILOV'S CONVICTION IN YUGOSLAVIA: It will make him a hero of the young rebels all over the Soviet bloc. His case demonstrates the need for a fundamental overhaul, probably a new revolution, if freedom of expression and thought are ever to be established in the Communist countries. Tito's Constitution, like Stalin's, calls for a free press, but jail is the price of taking this seriously. . . .

RFK's First Speech on Vietnam Since Last February: Safely Back in LBJ's Camp

"For Vietnam cannot be a plaything of politics. The American people will not allow irresponsible voices—whether politicians or newspaper publisher—to deceive them with talk of easy and sanitary victory. The American people know, the people of New Hampshire know, that the ultimate solution of the Vietnam war must be, not just in force of arms, but in patient difficult negotiation—negotiation which secures the vital national interest of all the participants, and the peace of the world.

"That is why Ambassador Goldberg's speech in the UN on Thursday was in my judgment critically important, for it spoke once again the determination of the United States to reach a peaceful settlement—a settlement which recognizes that the ultimate future of Vietnam is for the Vietnamese to decide, a settlement which recognizes as well that all South Vietnamese political elements have the right to 'peaceful participation in their nation's future.' We should all commend Ambassador Goldberg, as well as the President, for this constructive initiative. The Soviet Union and the North Vietnamese have responded to this initiative with the frozen rhetoric of conflict, but Ambassador Goldberg's speech was still an important step. It makes our own position clear, and it may yet gain a more constructive answer in the future.

"But even beyond these difficulties, we should all understand the complexity of the war extends also to the question of negotiation. Even if we were to arrive at the conference table, difficult as it has been to move in that direction, much more will be required to settle the war. The actual place of the National Liberation Front in the political life of South Vietnam; the relationship of North to South Vietnam, and the relations of each with the United States, the Soviet Union and China; the scope and duration of international or other guarantees of whatever settlement is reached—all these and more will remain to be determined. We must realize that a peaceful settlement will require that both sides make some concessions—that both sides concede matters that are important in order to preserve interests which are essential.

"Before we can hope to reach a settlement, therefore, our position with regard to all the critical issues must be clear at least in our minds. That position must flow from a clear understanding of our role in Southeast Asia and in the world—and a precise assessment of the likely outcome of every course of action. For we have a responsibility to the rest of the world and to our children to exert our best efforts of thought and talent and energy to find a solution, not an easy solution, for that does not exist, not a quick solution, for that does not exist, but a solution which will preserve our national interests without an even wider war in Asia."

—Text of Robert F. Kennedy's Statement on Vietnam to the New Hampshire Democratic State Convention, Sept. 24.

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Salinger's New Book Shows Why the White House Tries to Manage the News

What John F. Kennedy Never Understood About Freedom of the Press

Pierre Salinger's book *With Kennedy* shows how deeply resentful Kennedy was of press criticism, and how eager he was for some way to put restraints on the press. He opened his first press conference after the Bay of Pigs by shutting off all questions on it. "I do not think," he said, "any useful national purpose would be served by my going into the Cuban question this morning." The morning papers next day were critical of his refusal to discuss the subject. "He was still burning when I saw him in mid-morning," Salinger relates and then discloses Kennedy's outburst —

"What could I have said that would have helped the situation at all? That we took the beating of our lives? That the CIA and the Pentagon are stupid? What purpose do they think it would serve to put that on the record?" He shook his head. "We're going to have to straighten all this out, and soon. The publishers have to understand that we're never more than a miscalculation away from war and that there are things we are doing that we just can't talk about."

This passage makes it easier to understand why Kennedy was such a James Bond fan; the words reflect that kind of a universe, of constant conspiracy and imminent destruction. The conclusions to be drawn are the opposite of Kennedy's. If we are "never more than a miscalculation away from war" then it certainly does serve a national purpose to put on the record that the Pentagon and the CIA are stupid. For the greatest danger of miscalculation arises from the secret operations of this huge military-intelligence apparatus. The safety of the country demands more, not less, knowledge of its operations. But Kennedy's reaction was his famous speech to the American Newspaper Publishers' Association six days later, asking in effect for self-censorship in reporting clandestine operations like the attack on Cuba. Yet he himself, as we now know, told Turner Catledge of the *New York Times* months later that he wished that paper had published more about the Cuban preparations because it might have saved the country and himself from what proved to be a disaster.

At one moment the naive Salinger talks of keeping secret "things better for the enemy not to know about." But a more urgent concern becomes plain in his discussion of Kennedy's animosity to the reporting out of Vietnam in 1961-63. "Stories began appearing with increasing regularity," Salinger writes, "describing heavy involvement of U.S. forces in Vietnamese operations . . . they presented the American people with a picture of widening war in Southeast Asia—and it was this picture which . . . the Administration did not want to present." Salinger quotes with approval a silly *Detroit News* editorial which backed Kennedy's drive for more "restraint" in reporting. It said the First Amendment did not intend "that a nation shall commit suicide rather than keep a secret." The real intent was to *prevent* national suicide by making it difficult for the government to operate in secret, free from the scrutiny of a watchful press.

That "monolithic and ruthless conspiracy" Kennedy conjured up before the newspaper publishers as the enemy may prove less dangerous than the monolithic and ruthless conspiracy of cold warriors which operates through the Pentagon and the CIA. The Bay of Pigs showed it could make the President himself a prisoner of its melodramatic stupidities. Vietnam is a daily reminder of its mendacity and incompetence. We need more disclosure, not less, if we are to protect the country from it. But Johnson continues the efforts at "news management" Kennedy began.

Slight Oversight

"It is not only idle but unfair to seek out guilty men. President Eisenhower, after rejecting American military intervention in 1954, set in motion the policy of support for Saigon which resulted, two Presidents later, in American military intervention in 1965."

—Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "A Middle Way Out of Vietnam,"* New York Times *Sunday Magazine, Sept. 18.

Military intervention did not begin "two Presidents later" but one—under John F. Kennedy. It was he who, in violation of the Geneva agreement, poured more than 16,000 U.S. troops into the country between 1961 and 1963. This is rewriting history to fit the Kennedy legend.

How Goodwin Rewrote History in His ADA Speech to Imply LBJ Was A Dove in 1954

A lot of people seem to think Lyndon Johnson was a dove on Indochina policy in 1954. One reason is a speech that year by Senator Ed Johnson of Colorado saying "I am against sending American GI's into the mud and muck of Indochina." This has often been attributed to Lyndon Johnson. A similar confusion is fostered by Richard Goodwin's speech to the ADA Sept. 17. "Only a dozen years ago, in 1954," he declared, "another American leader assaulted our policy in Vietnam, saying 'The U.S. is in danger of being left naked and alone in a hostile world. . . .' It is in this same spirit of concern for our country," Goodwin went on, "that we should conduct our dissent as, on that day, did Lyndon Johnson then leader of the minority party."

The fact is that the speech was hawkish. Johnson derided Dulles, as we noted at the time, "for not standing up to the Communists at Geneva." In the "white paper" on the Vietnam war issued by the House Republican leadership three days after Goodwin spoke to the ADA, that Johnson speech of 1954 is characterized as an attempt "to pull the rug out from under the Eisenhower Administration as the critical Geneva conference opened." Johnson said the Republicans had left the U.S. "naked and alone" by failing to negotiate in time joint intervention with the British and French. He did not want to see peace by negotiation.

The New York Times, in reporting that Johnson speech May 7, 1954, said it marked the first break in 16 months of bipartisanship. As long as Eisenhower pursued a hard line in Latin America as in Asia, he had Johnson's backing. Johnson sponsored the "Monroe Doctrine" resolution supporting Dulles's efforts to overthrow the Arbenz government in Guatamela. Johnson's only other difference with the Republican Administration that year also found him to the right of Ike. Johnson stood with Knowland in asserting that the U.S. would not support the UN if it admitted Red China. Ike had refused to go that far. Johnson in 1954 was already showing the same hard line attitude so evident since he won election disguised as a dove 10 years later.

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Johnson Still Unwilling to Deal With the Men We Are Fighting

(Continued from Page One)

the withdrawals we had required in return for an end to the bombings? Who would supervise? How could the guerrillas afford to open up their secret bases, their one protection against our savage bombardments, to outside view until assured of a peace satisfactory to them? What would we consider "external forces?" How many would we accept as indigenous? How many would we call Northerners in disguise? These are skillfully hidden mines on the path of negotiation.

Why We Won't Recognize the Rebels

The guerrillas cannot be expected to lay down their arms until satisfied that they would have a satisfactory role in the making of the peace and the shaping of their country's future. U Thant's Point 3 called for their participation in the settlement. "Some argue," Goldberg said, referring to a lost intramural battle he and Humphrey are reported to have waged within the White House, "that, regardless of different views on who controls the Viet Cong, it is a combatant force and, as such, should take part in the peace negotiations." But Johnson does not want to admit, by recognizing the Viet Cong at the peace table, that we have been fighting an indigenous rebellion, for this would take the moral grounds from under our intervention and the political grounds from under his effort to restore a safely non-Leftist South Vietnam. So all Goldberg was allowed to say is that this, the key question, would not prove "an insurmountable problem." Johnson wouldn't close a deal for a bull on his ranch on such vague terms.

The guerrillas must find no more reassuring Goldberg's vague declaration that we do not "seek to exclude any segment of the South Vietnamese people from peaceful participation in their country's future." In 1954 similar promises, much more explicitly spelled out, guaranteed the Viet Minh an amnesty and full political rights. These were broken with our encouragement and they were killed or put into Diem's concentration camps. That is when the rebellion started. How can you expect the rebels to give up in return for the same kind of promises? What we offer must look to them like a one-way ticket to the jails and prison islands the Ky regime has already filled with militant Buddhists.* How many Americans really trust Johnson? Why should they?

* Robert Shaplen's estimate of the number jailed (New Yorker, Aug. 20) is "four or five thousand."

Hiding Our True Air Losses

Two clues turned up the past week which indicate that the full extent of plane losses in Vietnam are being hidden from us. The New York Times Sept. 23, in reporting McNamara's 30 percent increase in war plane orders, said "the number of planes downed over the north does not reflect the actual loss rate" since this does not include aircraft "severely damaged through anti-aircraft fire or scrapped for other operational reasons." The latest figure for planes "downed over the north" was 386 as of late Monday, Sept. 26 (AP that day in Wash. Eve. Star). The phrasing "planes downed over the North", excludes those plans which were hit over the North but managed to glide or fly to a crash landing in the sea or at a home base.

The latest figure for planes shot down over South Vietnam was 123 but "this" the AP reported from Saigon (Sept. 25, Wash. Star) "excludes parked aircraft lost through enemy attacks and those wrecked by mechanical failure." This makes an official total North and South of 509 planes lost. (This does not include helicopters.) If as many more were put out of commission by enemy action in the other ways indicated by these admissions, the total would be 1,000 lost. In the Korean war almost half of total air losses (The U.S. Air Force in Korea, p. 645) were to non-enemy causes. If the ratio is similar in Vietnam, the true totals may thus easily be as great or greater than the 1500-or-so claimed by the enemy.

According to McNamara's own figures we are producing "from 800 to 1,000" fighters and fighter-bombers this fiscal year and had planned as many for next fiscal year. That is a total for the two years of 1,600 to 2,000 planes. The new order adds 280 more. That is a better index of the attrition rate than the official figure of 509 lost. If the total lost is only 1,000, then judging by the cost of the new planes on order, $2.5 million each, the total dollar cost of these losses would be $2.5 billion.

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